



Community Services
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Beverly Hills Completes 2016 Homeless Population Count

The City Sees Decline in Homelessness; Attributes Reduction to City's Programs and Services

Beverly Hills, CA – On Wednesday, January 27th over 35 community volunteers participated in the City's annual Homeless Count which is part of the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority effort to understand and address the complexities of the state of homelessness in Greater Los Angeles. The community volunteers, in partnership with the Beverly Hills Ambassador Team, Beverly Hills Police Department and the City's Changing Lives and Sharing Places (CLASP) homeless outreach team, counted 14 homeless individuals and one make-shift shelter in Beverly Hills, which is more than a 50% decrease over last year when the count was at 29. The City has seen a reduction in homelessness since the count began in 2009, recording 42 homeless individuals that year. The count took place every two years since then, this year it was made an annual event. In 2011, 37 homeless were counted and in 2013, it went down to 30.

Beverly Hills Human Services attributes this year's significant reduction to the implementation of the Beverly Hills Ambassador Program which began in July 2015. The Ambassador team provides services 7 days a week, 21 hours a day in the business triangle and on South Beverly Drive. The team focuses on hospitality and safety services, and coordinates closely with the CLASP homeless outreach team. Referrals from the Ambassadors helps the CLASP team quickly link homeless individuals with the local and regional social services available to address their needs.

With the Ambassadors consistent presence and extra boots on the ground, the City's Human Services Division and CLASP team have been able to focus on intensive case management to link vulnerable individuals to critical services needed to stabilize their lives – housing, medical, mental health, and government benefits.

"Before the Ambassadors started we had significant problems with people sheltering in City parking structures at night and making money by aggressively panhandling on City streets by day. Now the Ambassadors monitor the parking lots, removing door jams and reporting broken door handles to City staff so that the structures cannot be accessed after hours. Individuals who agreed to seeking shelter got the assistance from Human Services," explains Latta.

The Beverly Hills Homeless Count was in conjunction with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count which began January 26. More than 6,000 total volunteers participated in the three-night effort to count homeless people in the Greater Los Angeles area. Numbers are reported to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and influence the amount of federal funding directed to Los Angeles County.

You can be part of the solution to end homelessness by supporting the City's Community Partners that provide the social service safety net for Beverly Hills' most vulnerable community members. For more information, contact Jim Latta with the Human Services Division, 310-285-2537 and online www.beverlyhills.org/hsd

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